UNITED NATIONS

DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

November 1995

Volume XVIII, Bulletin No. 9

Contents

Page

I. Recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to the General Assembly 1

II. International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, 29 November 1995 3

III. Debate on the question of Palestine opens in the General Assembly 4

IV. Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People condemns the assassination of the Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin 7

V. Secretary-General issues a statement on the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin 8

VI. Secretary-General reports on peace efforts 8

VII. Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories reports on situation 9

VIII. Palestinian journalists receive certificates of participation in the Department of Public Information training programme 12

IX. Non-governmental organizations: activities and information 13

96-02738

Best copy available

I. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Committee met on 15 November 1995, at which time it adopted its report to the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. The report contained the following recommendations:

"The year 1995 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. On that historic occasion, the leaders of the world solemnly reaffirmed the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their commitment to them. They expressed their determination that the United Nations would work with renewed vigour and effectiveness in promoting peace, development, equality and justice and understanding among the peoples of the world. They also reaffirmed the inalienable right of self-determination of all peoples, taking into account the particular situation of peoples under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, established 20 years ago to ensure that the Palestinian people would be able to attain these noble objectives, pledges to redouble its efforts in pursuit of this goal.

"The signing of the Declaration of Principles in September 1993 by Israel and the PLO created a dramatic turning-point in the search for peace in the Middle East, leading to the emergence of a new reality on the ground, enabling the Palestinian people to take its first steps towards independence and opening new possibilities for cooperation among the peoples of the region. At the same time, the peace process remains fragile and fraught with dangers. The Committee is encouraged that during the past year the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations have proceeded despite repeated delays and acts of violence, which have caused many innocent victims on both sides and aroused the concern and condemnation of the international community. Welcoming the signing on 28 September 1995, in Washington, D. C., of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Committee expresses its commitment to continue and intensify its support for the Palestinian people and its leadership during the transition process.

"The Committee reaffirms that the United Nations has a permanent responsibility with respect to the question of Palestine until a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement is reached. The Committee reiterates that the involvement of the United Nations in the peace process, both as the guardian of international legitimacy and in the mobilization and provision of international assistance, is essential for the successful outcome of the peace efforts. As the organ of the General Assembly established to deal with the question of Palestine, the Committee believes that its own role continues to be useful and necessary during the transitional period and until a satisfactory final settlement is achieved.

"The Committee reaffirms that such a settlement must be based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, and the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, in particular the right to self-determination. The Committee also believes that, during the interim period, Israel must recognize and respect its obligations as the occupying Power under the Fourth Geneva Convention. While remaining firm on this position of principle, the Committee has continued to make adjustments in its approach and programme of work in order to make a concrete contribution to promoting the implementation of the agreements reached and to mobilize international assistance to the Palestinian people. The Committee invites the General Assembly once again to recognize the importance of its role and to reconfirm its mandate with overwhelming support.

"The Committee wishes to express its great appreciation to those States which have supported its work and have facilitated the organization of events held under the

Committee's auspices by providing venues and participating in the debates. The Committee believes that, in view of the new situation and the responsive position of the Committee reflected in its programme of work, the time has come for all States to recognize the valuable contribution that the Committee can make as a forum for dialogue, analysis, exchange of expertise, mobilization of public opinion and action in support of the peace efforts and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, as well as their socio-economic development. The Committee considers that a broadening of its membership to include countries that support its objectives but have not hitherto participated in its work would greatly enhance the contribution of the United Nations to promote peace at this important stage.

"The Committee considers that its seminars on economic and social issues confronting the Palestinian people in the occupied territory have been particularly useful in bringing together experts in the relevant fields, including Palestinians and Israelis, as well as donor countries, United Nations departments, agencies and organizations, non-governmental organizations active in the field and others, and will continue its efforts in that regard. In view of the new situation on the ground created by the Declaration of Principles and subsequent implementation agreements, and mindful of the measures being taken by the Palestinian Authority to establish an effective administration, which require continued international support, the Committee is of the view that one of the events under its auspices should be held as soon as possible in the territory under the Palestinian Authority to address various aspects of the transition period.

"The Committee also stresses the value of its role as a catalyst in bringing together and developing a network of non-governmental organizations interested in the question of Palestine and in promoting solidarity activities, as well as concrete assistance. The Committee intends to continue to promote the positive contribution of the non-governmental organization constituency to meet the humanitarian and development needs of the Palestinian people during the transitional period, in cooperation with the Palestinian Authority. Noting with appreciation the increasing interest and participation of Governments, in particular those of donor countries, and United Nations organizations and agencies in non-governmental organization events organized under its auspices, the Committee intends to continue its programme of meetings in the various regions in the coming year. The Committee will continue to seek to structure these meetings for maximum usefulness and to cooperate with coordinating committees for non-governmental organizations with a view to developing effective follow-up mechanisms and encouraging a wider and more active participation by non-governmental organizations, in particular those whose work encompasses humanitarian and development-oriented ends and programmes.

"The Committee emphasizes the essential contribution of the Division for Palestinian Rights as a centre for research, monitoring, the preparation of studies and the collection and dissemination of information on all issues related to the question of Palestine. The Committee requests the Division to continue its programme of publications, in consultation with the Committee, and to pay particular attention to preparing studies or updating existing ones on the various issues that are subject to final status negotiations. The Committee notes with satisfaction the progress made in including in UNISPAL documentation on the relevant activities of the United Nations system and the non-governmental organization network, as well as other information material, including documents related to the peace process. Recalling that the Division was established at the request of the General Assembly in 1978 and upgraded in 1982, and that its mandate has been reaffirmed and expanded in various resolutions since then, the Committee requests the Secretary-General to maintain the political structure and composition of the Division in accordance with those resolutions, and to continue to provide it with the necessary resources in order to carry out its tasks.

"The Committee continues to consider that the Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information is very useful in raising the awareness of the international community concerning the complexities of the question and the situation in the Middle East in general. The Committee believes that the Programme is contributing effectively to an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and supportive of the peace process. The Programme should follow and reflect realities related to the new experiences of the Palestinian people, provide assistance in the field of Palestinian media development and continue to disseminate information about the just cause of the Palestinian people, in addition to continuing its support of dialogue in the effort to build peace.

"The Committee will continue to strive to achieve maximum effectiveness in the implementation of its mandate and to adjust its work programme in the light of developments, in order to continue to contribute, to the extent possible, to the realization of the common United Nations objective of achieving a just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine."

II. INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, 29 NOVEMBER 1995

On 29 November 1995, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was observed at United Nations Headquarters in New York and at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna, as well as in several other cities in accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977. All States Members of the United Nations, specialized agencies and observers were invited to attend the solemn meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

At that meeting, statements were made by: Kéba Birane Cissé (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee; Freitas do Amaral (Portugal), President of the General Assembly; Chinmaya Gharekhan, Special Political Adviser to the Secretary-General and Representative to the multilateral peace talks on the Middle East, and representative of the Secretary-General; and Salim Bin Mohammed Al-Khussaiby (Oman), President of the Security Council for the month of November.

The Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations read out a message from Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Also, Herman Leonard de Silva (Sri Lanka) made a statement as Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.

In addition, Julio Londoño-Paredes, the representative of Colombia, read out a message from Ernesto Samper, President of Colombia, in his capacity as Chairman of the Heads of State and Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. A further message was delivered by Ahmed Snoussi on behalf of Abdellatif Falali, Foreign Minister of Morocco and Chairman of the Twenty-second Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.

Said Kamal, Under-Secretary-General for Palestine Affairs of the League of Arab States, read out a message from Ahmed Esmat Abdel Meguid, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States. A further statement was made by David Weaver, the representative of the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine.

Concluding statements were made by Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the Political Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and by the Chairman of the Committee.

The text of all statements and messages in connection with the Day of Solidarity will be included in a special bulletin to be published by the Division for Palestinian Rights.

An art exhibit entitled "Generations", featuring five prominent Palestinian artists - Afaf Arafat, Nabil Anani, Tayseer Bakarat, Fayez El-Sirsawi and Jawad Al-Malhi, was on display in the Public Lobby of the United Nation Secretariat Building from 29 November to 5 December 1995. The exhibit was sponsored by the Committee in cooperation with the Palestine Observer Mission to

the United Nations. At the opening, on 29 November, the Chairman of the Committee made a statement, followed by statements by Farouk Kaddoumi and Tayseer Barakat.

III. DEBATE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE OPENS IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On 29 November 1995, the debate on the question of Palestine began in the General Assembly. In accordance with past practice, the item was taken up directly in the plenary meetings and was introduced by the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The Rapporteur of the Committee introduced the annual report. The full text of both statements is presented below:

Statement by the Chairman

"It is an honour for me to introduce the agenda item on the question of Palestine in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

"This year, the United Nations celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. On that historic occasion, the leaders of the whole world solemnly reaffirmed the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and their commitment to them. They expressed their determination that the United Nations will work with renewed vigour and effectiveness in promoting peace, development, equality and justice and understanding among the peoples of the world. They also reaffirmed the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination, with particular attention to the situation of peoples under colonial or other forms of domination or foreign occupation.

"The question of Palestine is the oldest conflict on the United Nations agenda, for the Organization has been concerned with it practically since its inception, it has provoked several wars in the region of the Middle East and over the years it has been the source of countless sufferings and loss of human life. The Assembly has repeatedly reaffirmed that so long as this question has not been resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner and in accordance with international norms it will remain the United Nations responsibility.

"Our Committee, established 20 years ago with the mandate of recommending a solution to the Palestinian problem, is convinced that a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine must be based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), on the principle of the withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and from the other occupied Arab territories, on respect for the right of all States in the region to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized boundaries, and on the recognition and exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination, rights which must be guaranteed them. Those are basic principles that have been overwhelmingly endorsed by the international community and without which there can no lasting solution to this question.

"The positive developments of the past few years since the beginning of the peace process at Madrid in 1991 has created a new climate in the relations among the parties and altered the realities on the ground, clearly mapping the path in the right direction. Despite the tragic event of 4 November of this year when an assassin's bullet ended the life of Israel's Prime Minister, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, to whom we owe a large measure of the progress that has been made, it is our fervent hope that that act of violence will not lead to a setback in the peace process and that progress towards implementation of the agreements will continue. The Committee welcomed the statement by Israel's new Prime Minister, Mr. Shimon Peres, that the tragedy will have no adverse effect on the peace process to which Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization are committed. The outpouring of support by the international community, as well as by Israeli public opinion, clearly shows that the path on

which the parties are engaged is the correct one and that they must persevere.

"Notwithstanding the concerns created by the unstable situation on the ground, the Committee rejoices with the international community at the progress that was made in the negotiations over the past year, and especially at the signing at Washington, D. C. on 28 September 1995 of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. That document supersedes all previous agreements on the implementation of the Declaration of Principles and provides for further withdrawals of Israeli forces, Palestinian elections and the assumption by the Palestinian Authority of various responsibilities in the West Bank, as well as for the gradual release of Palestinian prisoners and for cooperation and greater dialogue and mutual understanding among the parties.

"The Committee hopes that this agreement represents the beginning of a new stage in which the Palestinian people will be able to move closer to the exercise of their inalienable rights to self-determination and sovereignty in their homeland and that both the letter and the spirit of the agreement will be implemented, thereby contributing to the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace. The Committee is committed to continue and intensify its support for the Palestinian people and their leadership during the transitional period and urges the international community to continue to do its utmost in this regard.

"In this connection we welcome the initiatives - exemplified by the Second Middle East/North Africa Economic Summit held at Amman in October 1995 under the aegis of His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan - being made to facilitate the expansion of investment in the region and enhance regional cooperation and regional development, thereby promoting stability and an atmosphere conducive to peace.

"The Committee also wishes to express its appreciation to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and his Representative in the occupied territories for having pursued their endeavours to coordinate assistance to the Palestinian people, which is beginning to bear fruit in a number of positive ways. The efforts of the donor community and United Nations bodies, especially the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, also must be noted.

"For its part, the Committee, mindful of its mandate to contribute to the effective implementation of the agreements reached and to promote solidarity with and assistance to the Palestinian people, organized a number of productive seminars, meetings of non-governmental organizations and symposiums in 1995. The Committee is particularly grateful to Brazil for having acted as host last March at Rio de Janeiro to the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Seminar and the Latin American and Caribbean NGO Symposium, and to the French Government for its help in organizing the Seminar on Palestinian Administrative, Managerial and Financial Needs and Challenges at the Headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at Paris in June. The Committee also held a North American Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine at New York and a European NGO Symposium and International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine at Vienna.

"Participating in these various events were prominent Palestinian and Israeli personalities, experts from various regions, representatives of donor countries and of other governmental and intergovernmental entities, agencies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations having some involvement with the Palestinian people. This showed that the Committee can play a valuable role as a forum for dialogue, exchange of information, mobilization of public opinion and action for peace, for the Palestinian people's exercise of its rights and for Palestinian socio-economic development.

"Our Committee believes that, as the peace process advances, it must be accompanied by a considerable effort on the part of the international community to solve the various critical problems of the transition

period, including unresolved political questions, such as the settlements, Jerusalem, the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian socio-economic situation.

"In carrying out the clear political mandate given to it by the General Assembly, the Committee will continue to make adjustments in its programme of work to reflect the new realities in the region and make a useful contribution to the international community's efforts to bring about a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. In its endeavours the Committee will continue to rely on the assistance of the Division for Palestinian Rights of the United Nations Secretariat, whose contribution in monitoring, research, publications and the holding of seminars and meetings for non-governmental organizations has been particularly important and useful.

"The Committee considers that, along with the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Department of Public Information, each in its own domain, it will continue to provide the necessary support for the United Nations in the exercise of its responsibility with regard to this question, until the peace process finally reaches its conclusion.

"The Committee hopes that the States that support its objectives but have not yet participated in its work will consider doing so in order to enhance the contributions of the United Nations to the development of peace at this important stage."

Statement by the Rapporteur

"It is a pleasure for me, in my capacity as Rapporteur, to present to the General Assembly the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People covering its work in 1995 (A/50/35).

"During the past year, the Committee has carried out its work on the basis of its mandate as determined by the resolutions of the General Assembly. The report covers important developments concerning the question of Palestine, the peace process and the activities of the Committee during the past year.

"The introduction to the report is contained in chapter I, which indicates briefly the Committee's objectives and perspectives during the year. Chapters II and III are procedural and summarize the respective mandates of the Committee, the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Department of Public Information and give information on the Committee's programme of work. Chapter IV reviews the situation relating to the question of Palestine.

"The Committee was encouraged that during the past year the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations have proceeded despite repeated delays and acts of violence which have taken many innocent victims on both sides and aroused the concern of the international community. In his statement, the Chairman of the Committee has already had the opportunity to transmit to this Assembly the feeling of the Committee in this respect.

"On 27 August 1995, the parties signed at Cairo the Protocol on Further Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities. On 28 September 1995, The parties signed, in Washington, D. C., the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which supersedes all earlier agreements in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles. The Agreement reaffirms the parties' understanding that the interim self-government arrangements provided therein, are an integral part of the whole peace process and that the negotiations on the permanent status, which will start no later than 4 May 1996, will lead to the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). The Committee welcomed these agreements and is determined to continue to support the Palestinian people and its leadership during the transitional period.

"Despite these positive developments, the Committee noted that the situation in the areas still under Israeli occupation gave reason for concern and continued to create facts on the ground

which had potential negative effects for the future exercise of Palestinian rights and the peace process. The Committee also voiced its concern at the continued problems relative to the living conditions of Palestinians, in particular in the Gaza Strip.

"Chapter V of the report provides a detailed overview of the various activities of the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 49/62 A and B. The Committee closely monitored the situation on the ground, and the Chairman addressed a letter to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council on the issue of the expansion and consolidation of settlements by the Israeli Government in the occupied territories. The Chairman also represented the Committee at the meetings of the Security Council on the same issue, as well as at meetings of various intergovernmental organizations. Furthermore, the Committee followed closely, and some of its members participated in, meetings of United Nations bodies and agencies, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and intergovernmental organizations, at which various statements, resolutions and communiqués relevant to these issues were adopted.

"As the Chairman has already stated, during 1995 the Committee sponsored a Latin American and Caribbean Seminar and a European Seminar on Palestinian Administrative, Managerial and Financial Needs and Challenges; jointly with the Seminar, a Latin American and Caribbean Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Symposium; an NGO Symposium for the North American region; and the combined United Nations International NGO Meeting/European NGO Symposium on the question of Palestine.

"Finally, the report describes very briefly the many activities of the Division for Palestinian Rights of the United Nations Secretariat in the fields of research, monitoring and publications and in connection with a computer-based information system on the question of Palestine. It also describes the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

"Chapter VI covers the work of the Department of Public Information in accordance with resolution 49/62 C, including the publications and audio-visual activities of that Department, as well as the journalists' encounters and new missions to the area.

"Chapter VII, the last Chapter, contains the recommendations of the Committee."

For the text of the recommendations, see section I above.

IV. BUREAU OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE CONDEMNS THE ASSASSINATION OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL, YITZHAK RABIN

The following statement was issued on 6 November 1995 (see GA/PAL/710):

"The Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in its meeting this morning condemned the assassination of the Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, on 4 November.

"The Bureau expressed its hope that this criminal act will not have an adverse effect on the Middle East peace process to which Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization have committed themselves.

"The Bureau reiterated its full support for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process until a comprehensive and just solution is achieved."

V. SECRETARY-GENERAL ISSUES A STATEMENT ON THE ASSASSINATION OF PRIME MINISTER RABIN

The following statement by the Secretary-General was issued on 4 November 1995 (see SG/SM/5806):

> "I have learned with profound shock and sadness of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel. I condemn in the strongest possible terms this outrageous act of terror which has struck down one of the greatest leaders in Israel's history.
>
> "I pay tribute to the wisdom and vision of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin whose unswerving commitment to his country, and whose recognition of the need for Israelis and Arabs alike to put behind the hostility and bloodshed which had poisoned the region for decades, led to the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan and the agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).
>
> "Prime Minister Rabin will forever be remembered for his courageous leadership these past three years.
>
> "On this tragic occasion, I extend my heartfelt condolences to the Rabin family and to the Government and people of Israel. The United Nations mourns with them tonight."

VI. SECRETARY-GENERAL REPORTS ON PEACE EFFORTS

In its resolution 49/62 D of 14 December 1994 on the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, the General Assembly noted the progress made in the peace process and stressed the need for the realization of Palestinian rights and Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967. The Assembly also emphasized the importance of a more active and expanded role by the United Nations, and requested the Secretary-General to "continue his efforts with the parties concerned, and, in consultation with the Security Council, for the promotion of peace in the region and to submit progress reports on developments in this matter".

In a brief report submitted on 7 November 1995 (A/50/725-S/1995/930), the Secretary-General reported on his correspondence with the Security Council and the parties concerned, and made the following observations:

> "The past year has seen important progress in the Middle East peace process. The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which was signed on 28 September 1995, represented a significant step forward in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles (A/48/486-S/26560, annex). It provided a solid basis for the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, a goal that has long been sought by the United Nations. I earnestly hope that the resolve and dedication to peace shown by Israeli and Palestinian leaders will continue to guide them through the transitional stage until a permanent settlement is reached on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).
>
> "I hope that these developments, together with the ongoing implementation of the Israeli-Jordanian peace accord, will generate momentum for progress on the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese tracks of the Middle East peace talks, leading to a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.
>
> "The United Nations will continue to support the peace process, politically and economically, in order to reinforce what has been achieved in the course of negotiations and help build the foundations for a new post-conflict Middle East. It already participates actively in the multilateral negotiations on regional economic, security, environment, water and refugee issues. The United Nations agencies and programmes are doing their utmost to assist the

Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank. The United Nations Special Coordinator, Mr. Terje Rod Larsen of Norway, and his Office have been instrumental in supporting and facilitating these activities, which are playing an important role in building peace. In the transitional period, he will continue to serve as a focal point for United Nations economic, social and other assistance to the Palestinians throughout the occupied territories."

VII. SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES REPORTS ON SITUATION

The twenty-seventh report of the Special Committee (A/50/463) was issued on 22 September 1995 and was transmitted to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General. It followed two periodic reports (A/50/170 and A/50/282), which were transmitted to the Assembly on 2 May 1995 and 13 July 1995, respectively. In accordance with established practice, the reports were allocated to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) of the Assembly, together with a number of related reports.

The reports under the item were summarized as follows in a press release issued at United Nations Headquarters (see GA/SPD/80):

> "In its reports, the Special Committee surveys the general situation in the occupied territories and incidents resulting from the occupation, and lists Palestinians killed by troops or Israeli civilians, those killed as a result of the occupation, as well as other incidents. The reports also review the administration of justice, including the right to a fair trial, and contain information on the treatment of civilians and detainees, annexation and settlement, and on the occupied Syrian Arab Golan.
>
> "On the treatment of civilians, the reports deal with incidents of harassment, physical ill-treatment and expulsions, and reported incidents of collective punishment, including houses or rooms demolished or sealed, the imposition of curfews and the sealing-off or closing-off of areas. The Special Committee reviews the economic and social situation in the territories, settlers' activities affecting the civilian population, and measures affecting the fundamental freedoms of movement, education, religion and expression.
>
> "In its recommendations, contained in its latest report (document A/50/463), the Special Committee appeals to Israel to consider taking a number of specific actions that would safeguard the basic human rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs in the occupied territories. Those measures would include the full application by Israel of the relevant provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, full compliance with all resolutions adopted by the United Nations system on the question of the occupied territories, and full cooperation of the Israeli authorities with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.
>
> "The Special Committee also appeals to Israel to 'act in conformity with the spirit animating the peace process' by giving serious consideration to a series of concrete measures. Those measures would include the establishment of rules of engagement for its security forces that fully respect human rights standards, the exercise of restraint in responding to outbreaks of violence, and putting an immediate end to the activities of undercover units -- in particular to extrajudicial executions perpetrated by them. The Special Committee also appeals to Israel to exercise strict control over any abuses perpetrated by settlers, to prevent their acts of violence and

carry out full and impartial investigations, bringing justice to those responsible.

"Other measures include halting the expansion of settlements and putting an end to the ongoing policy of land confiscation, the thorough and impartial administration of justice, ending interrogation practices amounting to torture and ill-treatment, and reviewing and publishing in full the guidelines concerning interrogation procedures. The Special Committee also appeals to Israel to review the situation of all Palestinian and other Arab prisoners and expedite their release, to refrain from detaining residents of the occupied territories in Israel and improve conditions of detention, and to allow all persons who were deported or expelled from the territories to return and, where applicable, have their properties restituted.

"Other recommended measures would have Israel put an end to all practices that negatively affect the economic and social situation of the population of the territories and hinder the enjoyment of a number of fundamental rights and freedoms. It would also refrain from the imposition of curfews and closures and the destruction of property.

"In his letter of transmittal, Special Committee Chairman Herman Leonard de Silva points out that the Government of Israel has continued to withhold its cooperation from the Special Committee.

"He notes that the period under review follows the signing at Cairo on 4 May 1994 of the Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area and the subsequent establishment of the Palestinian National Authority. He says it was expected that those agreements would usher in a new era, with the establishment of peace, justice, understanding and respect for human rights in the region. However, the general situation of human rights in the territories still remained 'very serious and a matter of grave concern'.

"A major factor contributing to the lack of improvement, he states, was the repeated closures and consequent restrictions on the freedom of movement imposed by Israeli authorities following serious security incidents caused by groups opposed to the peace process. Other contributing factors, he states, were the expropriations of Arab-owned land, the violent behaviour of settlers, the large number of Palestinian prisoners who remain in Israeli detention and the deterioration in their conditions, the increasingly harsh methods amounting to torture used by Israeli interrogators, as well as other human rights violations committed under the pretext of security considerations.

"The Chairman notes that, while the overall level of violence and number of deaths in the occupied territories had declined during the period under review, the nature of the violence perpetrated by the Israeli Defence Forces was 'of an aggravated kind'. In addition, the activities of undercover units were said to be unchecked.

"In conclusion, he says that despite the signing of the Declaration of Principles and the Cairo Agreement, unless progress was made to ensure respect for human rights in the occupied territories, support for the peace process would 'erode further and give way to despair'. The progress in the peace process must go hand-in-hand with full compliance with all relevant United Nations resolutions and all universally accepted standards of human rights.

"The four reports of the Secretary-General (A/50/657-660) are issued pursuant to requests made in resolution 49/36, parts A through D. Part A concerns support for the Special Committee's work and dissemination of information on its activities. Part B asserts the applicability to the occupied territories of the 1949 Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in wartime. It demands that Israel accept the applicability of the Convention in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and comply with its provisions. It calls on States parties to the Convention to ensure respect for its provisions by Israel. Part C demands that Israel desist from taking any measures in violation of the Convention. It calls on Israel, as the occupying Power, to accelerate the release of all remaining Palestinians arbitrarily detained or

imprisoned, and to respect the Palestinians' fundamental freedoms, pending the extension of self-government to the rest of the West Bank.

"Part D of resolution 49/36 calls on Israel to comply with relevant resolutions on the occupied Syrian Golan and to desist from changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan and in particular to desist from the establishment of settlements. It determines that all related legal and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel are null and void. It further calls on Israel to desist from imposing Israeli citizenship on the Syrian citizens there, and to desist from its repressive measures against that population, and calls upon Member States not to recognize any of those administrative measures and actions.

"With regard to support for the Special Committee's work (document A/50/657), the Secretary-General states that all necessary facilities were provided for it to meet in March, May and August 1994, to carry out a field mission to Egypt, Jordan and Syria in April-May 1994, and to issue its periodic reports. The Department of Public Information (DPI) had continued to provide press coverage of its meetings and to distribute related information materials to non-governmental organizations and the public at large.

"Both at Headquarters and through its information centres and services, DPI had publicized the Committee's 1995 mission to the Middle East, the Secretary-General states. A volume for the new 'Blue Book' series, The United Nations and Human Rights 1994-95, referred to the work of the Committee. In addition, the Secretary-General, on 15 May 1995, issued a note verbale to all States drawing their attention to resolution 49/36 A-D.

"On matters relating to Israel as the occupying Power (A/50/658), the application of the Geneva Convention (A/50/659), and the occupied Syrian Golan (A/50/660), the Secretary-General states that he issued a note verbale to the Foreign Minister of Israel on 15 May, asking to be informed of any steps his Government had taken or would be taking concerning implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolution. As of 20 October 1995, no reply had been received.

"The Committee also had before it five letters to the Secretary-General -- four from the Permanent Observer of Palestine, and one from the Ambassador of Morocco.

"The letter from Morocco, dated 15 February 1995 (document A/50/82), contains the final communique of the fifteenth session of the Al-Quds Committee, which was held in Morocco on 16 and 17 January 1995.

"The Committee deliberated on the conditions facing Al-Quds al-Sharif and considered means to recover the city and to assist and support the Palestinian citizens and institutions in the Holy City. The Committee called on the Security Council to take necessary measures to compel Israel to desist from carrying out any settlement and Judaization of Al-Quds and any geographic or demographic changes therein.

"The Committee also asked States to abide by Security Council resolution 478 (1980), which calls for refraining from transferring their diplomatic missions to the city of Al-Quds al-Sharif. In addition, it strongly denounced the decision of the Israeli Knesset on 26 December 1994, which banned any activities of the Palestinian institutions in Al-Quds al-Sharif. The Committee requested the King of Morocco to pursue contacts to gain support to recover the city, and called on the Secretary-General to carry out the necessary contacts to consider ways to preserve the civilizational, cultural and religious heritage of the Holy City, and sustain the resistance of its inhabitants.

"In a letter dated 18 April 1995 (document A/50/159), the Head of the Political Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) said the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the city of Jerusalem, continued to deteriorate due to Israeli failure to comply with the Fourth Geneva

Convention, international humanitarian law and Security Council resolutions. Given the 'bloody events and clashes which have taken place', he called on the United Nations to intervene quickly to put an end to Israeli practices and to make Israel implement Council resolutions.

"In another letter, dated 28 April 1995 (document A/50/168), the Permanent Observer of Palestine said that the Israeli Government had just declared confiscation orders of 53 hectares of Palestinian land within the area of illegally annexed East Jerusalem. The Government also declared that the land would be appropriated to build further illegal Israeli settlements. Since the action violated international law and endangered the peace process, he called on the Security Council to take urgent measures to bring an end to the violations and rescind the declared confiscation orders.

"A further letter, dated 9 May 1995 (document A/50/176) contains a copy of a resolution entitled 'The issue of Jerusalem', which was adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States on 6 May. By its resolution, the Council condemned the Israeli Government's decision to expropriate more Palestinian land within and around Jerusalem and decided not to recognize any alterations made by Israel to the legal status, demographic composition or geographical form of the city of Jerusalem. It called on all countries of the world to affirm their refusal to recognize such changes. The Council of the League of Arab States also denied Israel's claim that Jerusalem was its eternal capital. The resolution also asked for a meeting of the Security Council on the matter.

"In another letter, dated 25 May 1995 (document A/50/191), the Permanent Observer of Palestine noted that on 22 May, the Israeli Cabinet had decided to suspend the expropriation of 53 hectares of land in Jerusalem, and that on 15 May, it had also stated that it had no intention to carry out additional expropriation of land in Jerusalem for housing purposes. The Observer called on the Security Council to closely follow these developments and remain seized of the matter."

VIII. PALESTINIAN JOURNALISTS RECEIVE CERTIFICATES OF PARTICIPATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION TRAINING PROGRAMME

The following statement was issued by the Department of Public Information on 21 November 1995 (see PAL/1825):

"Eight Palestinian journalists from broadcast and print media were presented today with certificates of participation in a United Nations Department of Public Information training programme, by Samir Sanbar, Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information.

"The training programme, from 6 October to 22 November, was a new Department of Public Information initiative within the framework of the Department's special information programme on the question of Palestine. Its objective was to assist the Palestinian people in building and strengthening their media capability.

"In addition to experiencing the historic activities which took place at United Nations Headquarters during the period of the fiftieth anniversary commemoration, the group of interns attended briefings by officials of the United Nations and United Nations specialized agencies as well as by representatives of media organizations in the United States. The eight journalists also participated in a one-week skills training workshop organized by CNN, in Atlanta; in two weeks of classes to upgrade skills at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs; and in one week of briefings at the United States Government branches, in particular the White House, the State Department and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in Washington, D. C.

"The eight journalists who participated in the Department of Public Information training programme are:

Saud Abu Ramadan, Reporter, United Press International and Stringer for the Washington Post and the Boston Globe

Aziz Al-Tineh, Editor, Palestinian News Agency WAFA

Saida Jibril Hamad, Reporter, Quds Press International News Agency

Mohamed A. M. Jaber, Editor and Reporter, Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation

Ola Kassab, Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation

Imad Nayef Musa, Editor, Jerusalem Report, and Correspondent, Jerusalem Times

Abdel Hakim Saleh, Editor, Voice of Liberty and Peace Radio

Maysoun Manasreh Salman, Editor and Anchor, Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation."

IX. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION

1. Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories, a bimonthly publication of the Foundation for Middle East Peace, is available from 555 13th Street, NW, Suite 800, Washington, D. C. 20004-1109 (Fax No. 202 637 5910). The November 1995 issue includes articles on Yitzhak Rabin's assassination and effects on extremist settlers' groups; the Palestinian-Israeli Agreement and Israeli settlements; an excerpt from Yitzhak Rabin's statement at the Knesset in support of ratification of the Israeli-Palestinian interim agreement; timetable for the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli Agreement; excerpts from an interview with Ariel Sharon; and United States concessions on loan guarantees to Israel.

2. The Other Front, which is published by the Alternative Information Centre (AIC), is available from AIC, P. O. Box 31417, Jerusalem (Fax No. 972 2 253 151). Issue No. 343 of 6 November 1995 features various articles and commentaries devoted to Prime Minister Rabin's assassination. Issue No. 344 of 13 November 1995 includes articles on the reawakening of the peace movement; on Prime Minister Rabin's assassination; and on Israeli extremists. Issue No. 345 of 20 November 1995 includes articles on Shimon Peres' new cabinet; results of polls on the outcome of elections if they were held immediately; and on opinions within the Jewish religious community. Issue No. 346 of 27 November 1995 includes articles on the dialogue between the peace movement and the Israeli settlements council; and the continued building in Jerusalem.

3. News From Within is a newsletter, also published by the Alternative Information Centre. Issue No. 11 of November 1995 includes articles on the evolution of the rationale behind this publication which is meant to promote social understanding between the two peoples; the possible linkage between Palestinian and Eastern Jewish (Sephardic) liberation; the cantonization of the occupied Palestinian territory after redeployment of the Israel Defence Forces; and on Jerusalem.

4. Centre for Palestine Research and Studies (CPRS) has published the Results of Public Opinion Poll No. 19 of August/September 1995, which covers the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The publication is available from CPRS, P. O. Box 132, Nablus, West Bank (Fax No. 09 380-384). It includes statistical information on armed attacks; the peace negotiations; the Palestinian Authority; Palestinian-Jordanian relations; and freedom of speech.

5. Kav La'Oved: Workers' Hotline for the Protection of Workers is available from 78 Allenby St. , Tel Aviv, Israel (Fax No. 03 517 3081). The October 1995 issue includes articles on the employment of Palestinians in Israel; mass arrests of Palestinian workers without permits; the new regulations in Gaza; closures and severance pay; a lawsuit on Palestinian social rights; Palestinian

workers in Israeli settlements; and an update on migrant workers.

6. Little Hands is a newsletter issued by Defence for Children International/Palestine Section, at P. O. Box 55201 Jerusalem (Fax No. 02 656 2962). The September 1995 issue includes articles on child labour in Palestine; International Day of the Child in Palestine; the girl child; housing rights; child ex-prisoners; and a legal aid programme for legal defence of Palestinian children.

7. Middle East International, a biweekly publication, is available from P. O. Box 53365, Temple Heights Station, Washington, D. C. 20009. Issue No. 412 of 3 November 1994 includes an analysis of the consequences of the assassination of Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shaqaqi as well as articles on the redeployment of Israeli soldiers from Jenin; the United States Congress decision to transfer the United States embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem; Yasser Arafat's visit to the United Nations, Harvard University and New York's Lincoln Center; and the continued water crisis in spite of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. Issue No. 513 of 17 November 1995 includes articles on the impact of Prime Minister Rabin's assassination on the peace process; reactions in the United States, Middle Eastern countries, and the international community; reactions of Palestinians and the PLO; the coming Palestinian elections and voter registration; possible agreement between Mr. Arafat and Hamas; results of a two-year study on possible approaches to the water crisis of Jordan, Israel and the occupied territories; and book reviews of Edward Said's Peace and its Discontents and Donald Neff's Fallen Pillars: US policy towards Palestine and Israel since 1945.

8. Israel and Palestine Political Report is a publication available from IJPU, Boite Postale 44, 75462 Paris CEDEX 10 (Fax No. 331 48009645). Issue No. 194 of November 1995 includes articles on Prime Minister Rabin's assassination; questions and answers about the Palestinian-Israeli agreement; and a chronology of events for July 1995.

9. Intifada-Related Head Injuries, a report by the Association of Israeli-Palestinian Physicians for Human Rights, is available from PHR, P. O. Box 10235, Tel Aviv 61101 Israel. The report illustrates the gravity of the problems posed by caring for and rehabilitating all those who received head injuries during the intifadah.

10. Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, available from the American Educational Trust, P. O. Box 53062, Washington, D. C. 20009 (Fax No. 202 232 6754). Issue No. 4 of October/November 1995 includes four views on what delayed implementation of the Oslo Agreement; articles on water and settlements; and views of religious leaders on the significance of Jerusalem to three faiths.